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I should like to make the following general observations on this work: (1) that the methods employed are strictly scientific; (2) that the translations are done into good, intelligent English—an unusual thing in such translations; (3) that the author's references to those who have preceded him, as well as to those who are working in this field at the present time, are always courteous and fair; and (4) that it is a distinct contribution to the study of the Letter Literature.

Dr. Johnston has made several corrections in the texts of the Letters published. I am inclined to think that my copy of K. 469, rv. 13 (H. 138), is correct, viz.: u-ka-ip-ni (uḳâ'ip-ni), without *u*. Delitzsch's rule does not always hold—especially in the Letters. In the glossary it would have been useful to students if the author had added forms from the other Letters, as in the cases of bâdu, ḫannû, kamâsu, etc.

The Letter Literature is difficult and important. There is room for many workers, who may expect to obtain good results in customs, history, and the lexicon. It is to be hoped that Dr. Johnston will continue his studies in these lines.

ROBERT FRANCIS HARPER.

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KING'S FIRST STEPS IN ASSYRIAN.[1]

King's *First Steps in Assyrian* is a manual, a method. It is always well to judge a book from the author's standpoint, and hence I quote from the preface: "The aim of the present work is to furnish the beginner with all the materials which he will require in his earliest studies of the Assyrian language and the cuneiform inscriptions. It contains a sketch of the most useful facts concerning the cuneiform system of writing, and an outline of the principles of Assyrian grammar; a list of the more common signs and ideograms; a series of texts and extracts, printed in the Assyrian cuneiform character with interlinear transliteration and translation, ranging in date from about B. C. 2250 to B. C. 260; and a full vocabulary to all the texts printed in the book."

The author has selected a great variety of texts. All branches of the Babylonian and Assyrian literature are represented. The Babylonian texts are printed in the Assyrian (Ninevite) characters. Great care has also been exercised in choosing texts which are of historical value.

The method of transliteration is the one in common use in America and on the continent—differing from that of Sayce. The translation is word for word, and the vocabulary is complete, the words being arranged in alphabetical order, after the style of Arnolt's *Dictionary*, and by roots, after Delitzsch, with cross references.

For beginners, and especially for those who cannot have the instruction of a teacher, this method is by far the most complete and satisfactory

[1] FIRST STEPS IN ASSYRIAN. A Book for Beginners, being a Series of Historical, Mythological, Religious, Magical, Epistolary and other Texts printed in Cuneiform Characters with Interlinear Transliteration and Translation, and a Sketch of Assyrian Grammar, Sign-List and Vocabulary. By L. W. King, M.A., Assistant in the Department of Egyptian and Assyrian Antiquities, British Museum. London: *Kegan Paul, Trench, Trübner & Co.*, Ltd., 1898. cxxxix+399 pp.; large 8vo. 15s.

yet published. A student with the help of this book may pursue the study of Assyrian alone. Many more do this in England than in America, where Assyrian is taught in all the universities of importance. For students at the university I should prefer Winckler's *Chrestomathy*, because of the number of complete texts furnished. The student feels that he has accomplished something definite when he has read a complete text, *e. g.*, of Esarhaddon, Sennacherib (Taylor), or Shalmaneser (Obelisk). The type makes these texts easier for beginners. After all, it may be as well—even with a teacher—to read these texts hurriedly before taking up the complete texts.

One may differ in some places about the transliteration and translation, but the work has been very well done, and it would not be gracious to haggle over small and insignificant points. The book has received very favorable comment from its reviewers both in England and America, as well as on the continent.

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T. WITTON DAVIES ON MAGIC, DIVINATION, AND DEMONOLOGY.[1]

The treatment of the subject is wholly inadequate to its importance. Dr. Davies, it is true, has made a careful study of the material furnished by the Old Testament, and due credit is to be given him for this, but he failed lamentably in the task of working up this material. There are several reasons for this failure. In the first place, he has not penetrated far enough into the philosophy of magic and divination; secondly, he is lacking in a knowledge of Semitic antiquities; and, thirdly, his philological training, despite the excellence of his teachers, is defective. The manner in which he cites authorities is unscientific. As an example we chose at random the note on p. 20, where Max Müller's *Hibbert Lectures* are quoted without even a reference to the page, and where, in addition, he gives Max Müller the title of "Sir." See also pp. 32, 95, 100, 114, etc. Sometimes he refers to Tylor's *Primitive Culture* as "Tylor" and again as "*Prim. Cult.*" His introduction of Arabic words after he has indicated the transliteration is as superfluous as it is annoying. The entire introductory chapter is of no critical value and fairly bristles with crudities. In dilettante fashion he adds the date of an author's death when referring to him (*e. g.*, pp. 11 and 21), and translates the titles of books, and, what is more, makes mistakes in doing so (p. 31). The calmness with which he sets aside authorities like Robertson Smith (p. 27), Tylor (p. 18), Jevons (p. 20) is amusing when we consider how poorly prepared the author is for his task.

The body of the book (pp. 30–61 and 78–102) is taken up with an enumeration and superficial discussion of the terms for sorcerer and

[1] MAGIC, DIVINATION, AND DEMONOLOGY AMONG THE HEBREWS AND THEIR NEIGHBOURS. Including an Examination of Biblical References and of Biblical Terms. By T. Witton Davies. London: *Clarke & Co.*, 1898. xvi + 132 pp. 3s. 6d.